

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 are pending. Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 1-5 have also been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Claims 1-5 remain for consideration. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. In particular, the Examiner alleges that it is unclear how the blade performs a cut that extends through the carrier layer and at the same time does not cut into the carrier layer.

Applicants respectfully assert that the subject matter referred to by the Examiner, viz., the phrases “causing said blade to engage said carrier layer” and “separating a coating blanket from said coating blanket material along said lines of cut extending through said carrier layer” from claim 1, are definite with respect to the language “a graphic is generally cut into the coating blanket material by cutting through the flexible layer 24 completely without cutting into the carrier layer 30” on page 8, lines 1-3, of the specification.

The language “a graphic is generally cut into the coating blanket material by cutting through the flexible layer 24 completely without cutting into the carrier layer 30” on page 8, lines 1-3, of the specification supports the step of “moving said cutter head, responsive to said graphic cutting data relative to said cutting surface, and said cutting blade between said non-working and working positions to selectively cut through portions of said flexible layer in a single pass during a cutting operation...” as is recited in claim 1. Additionally, the specification, on page 8, lines 5-24, supports the steps of “causing said blade to engage said carrier layer...thereby selectively cutting through portions of said carrier layer” and “separating a coating blanket from said coating blanket material along said lines of cut extending through said carrier layer....” Thus, (1) the flexible layer is cut (without cutting the carrier layer) and (2) then the carrier layer is cut.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the step of cutting the flexible layer and the step of cutting the carrier layer are supported in the specification and that, therefore, claim 1 (and claims 2-5 which depend from claim 1) are definite within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-3 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,277,736 to Logan (hereinafter “Logan”) in

view of U.S. Patent No. 4,920,495 to Pilkington (hereinafter "Pilkington"). The Examiner alleges that both Logan and Pilkington teach Applicants' invention and that, therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided Logan with the characteristics taught by Pilkington to allow for a more precise cut to take place.

Claim 1 recites a method for creating a coating blanket for use in a printing press. The method includes providing a sheet-type work material, providing a cutting apparatus, programming a controller with data, presenting the work material to the cutting apparatus, causing a drive means to move the work material over a cutting surface, moving a cutter head having a blade to cut through the work material, causing the blade to engage a carrier layer of the work material to selectively cut through portions of the carrier layer in response to signals from the controller, removing the work material from the cutting apparatus, and separating a coating blanket from the work material.

Logan is directed to a system that automatically weeds around graphics cut into a sheet of sign material having a backing by utilizing a tool that is moved relative to the sign material along a path offset from the lines of cut that define the graphic. In the manner in which the tool operates, a cutting tool cuts the graphics into the sign material. An overlay sheet is placed in registration with the graphic and is selectively bonded to the material using a pressure tool substituted for the cutting tool. The overlay sheet can then be pulled away from the sign material, thereby pulling the weed portions away from the graphic.

Logan fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a method for creating a coating blanket for use in a printing press, as recited in claim 1, in which a cutter head having a blade is caused to engage a carrier layer of a work material to selectively cut through portions of the carrier layer in response to signals from a controller, as is recited in claim 1. In the operation as described by Applicants, the blade cuts through the carrier layer of the work material in response to graphic cutting data and carrier layer cutting data as opposed to merely "weeding around" a graphic, as in Logan. Further, the steps subsequent to the weeding around step of Logan (i.e., placing an overlay sheet on a graphic and pulling surrounding material away from the graphic) imply that the work material is not cut through in the weeding step but that it is only scored or partially cut, thus making it necessary to place the overlay sheet on the graphic before pulling the surrounding material away. Such a method is in direct contrast to the steps of

moving a cutter head and a blade respectively to cut through the carrier layer of a work material, as is claimed.

Pilkington is directed to a sheet cutting machine in which a guidance system moves a blade across a work surface. The height of the blade is adjusted in accordance with stored data indicative of irregularities in the work surface. The data is obtained by using the guidance system to move a height sensor across the work surface. The height sensor includes a stylus that engages the work surface and senses the irregularities in the work surface when the stylus is scanned across the surface by the guidance system. Upon replacing the stylus with the blade, the machine can be operated in a mode in which the blade is used to cut through the work surface.

Pilkington fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a method for creating a coating blanket for use in a printing press in which the method includes programming a controller with data and causing a blade to engage a carrier layer of work material to selectively cut through portions of the carrier layer in response to signals from the controller, as is recited in claim 1. The use of a scanning technique that moves a height sensor across a work surface to sense irregularities as in Pilkington is, in effect, a pre-scan step. Such a pre-scan step has no relation to the step of causing a blade to engage a work material to selectively cut through a carrier layer in response to programmed data signals from a controller, as in claim 1.

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness for a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). Because Logan fails to disclose, teach, or suggest what Applicants recite in their claim 1, viz., moving a cutter head having a blade to cause the blade to engage a carrier layer of a work material to selectively cut through portions of the carrier layer in response to signals from a controller, Logan fails to teach all the claim limitations of Applicants' invention. Furthermore, because Pilkington fails to disclose, teach, or suggest what Applicants recite in their claim 1, viz., causing a blade to engage a carrier layer of work material to selectively cut through portions of the carrier layer in response to signals from a controller, Pilkington also fails to teach all the claim limitations of Applicants' invention. Because neither of the cited references, when taken individually, teach what Applicants claim, the Logan and Pilkington references

both individually fail to render Applicants' invention, as is recited in claim 1, obvious.

The combination of Logan and Pilkington also fails to establish a prima facie case of obviousness for Applicants' invention. Because neither Logan nor Pilkington teach causing a blade to engage a carrier layer of work material to selectively cut through portions of the carrier layer, the combination of Logan and Pilkington necessarily cannot teach causing a blade to engage a carrier layer of work material to selectively cut through portions of the carrier layer. Consequently, because the combination of the Logan and Pilkington references fails to teach all the claim limitations of Applicants' invention, the combination of the Logan and Pilkington references fails to render Applicants' invention, as is recited in claim 1, obvious.

Because claims 2, 3, and 5 depend from claim 1, and because claims that depend from a claim that is non-obvious are themselves necessarily non-obvious, claims 2, 3, and 5 are necessarily non-obvious. Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that claims 2, 3, and 5 are allowable.

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Logan in view of Pilkington as applied to claim 1 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,624,169 to Nelson (hereinafter "Nelson"). The Examiner alleges that Logan and Pilkington disclose Applicants' invention but fail to disclose sensing an amount of pressure exerted by the cutting blade in a direction approximately normal to the work material and adjusting the pressure to cut through the flexible layer in a single pass and into the carrier layer on each of the multiple cutting passes, but that Nelson does provide such teachings. The Examiner then alleges that it would have been obvious to one of skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided Logan in view of Pilkington with the characteristics taught by Nelson to allow for greater longevity of the cutting blade.

Because claim 4 depends from claim 1, and because claims that depend from a claim that is non-obvious are themselves necessarily non-obvious, claim 4 is necessarily non-obvious. Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that claim 4 is allowable.

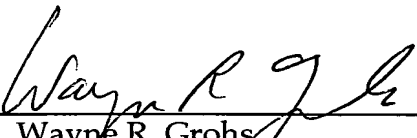
Applicants believe that the foregoing amendments and remarks fully comply with the Office Action and that the claims herein are allowable to Applicants. In view of the foregoing points that distinguish Applicants' invention from those of the prior art and render Applicants' invention non-

obvious, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the present application, remove the rejections, and allow the application to issue.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

A check in the amount of \$110.00 is enclosed for the one-month extension of time fee. If additional charges are incurred with respect to this Amendment, they may be charged to Deposit Account No. 13-0235 maintained by Applicants' attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Wayne R. Grohs
Registration No. 48,945
Attorney for Applicant(s)

McCORMICK, PAULDING & HUBER LLP
CityPlace II, 185 Asylum Street
Hartford, CT 06103-4102
Tel: (860) 549-5290
Fax: (860) 527-0464